

The Intricacies of Linguistic Interference in Arabic-English Translation

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Abstract

The present paper is designed to shed light on the intricacies of Arabic-English translation caused by linguistic interference (LI) when the translators recourse to their mother tongue in the translation from Arabic into English. The data comprises three works, namely *Qiṭṭah bi-Sab 'iti ar-Rwāḥ* (1982) 'A Cat with Seven Lives', *Arkhaṣ Layla* (1954) 'The Cheapest Night' and *Muthakrāt Saim* (1986) 'Ramadan Dairy'. The paper reveals that the translations have traces of interference that are due ignorance by the translators and little linguistic affinity between Arabic and English, which may jeopardise communication, thought to be the ultimate goal of translation. The study shows that LI is minimised when the functional equivalence is opted for whereas it is maximised when formal equivalence is employed. The study yet argues that LI may be a good means for intercultural interaction in view of Venuti's (1998) notions of domestication and foreignization.

Keywords: linguistic interference; equivalence; strategies; domestication; foreignization; negative transfer, positive transfer.